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FIRST BIENNIAL REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONER OF FORESTRY,
KANSAS,

FOR THE YEARS 1889-90.

MARTIN ALLEN, COMMISSIONER.

TOPEKA.

KANSAS PUBLISHING HOUSE: CLIFFORD C. BAKER, STATE PRINTER.
1890.

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REPORT.

To the Honorable LYMAN U. HUMPHREY, Governor of the State of Kansas:

SIR—Upon assuming the duties of Commissioner of Forestry, on the 1st day of April, A. D. 1889, I had to meet several quite unexpected conditions of things.

The shipments of the small lot of trees that had been raised at the forestry stations had not been completed. What had been sent out from Station No. 1 (where the greatest bulk of the stock had been grown) had been hauled to Wakeeney, a distance of eight or nine miles, and shipped from that point, and I was urged to continue to do so; but what was left for me to ship I took to the nearest railroad depot, Ogallah, only one mile from where the little trees were grown and packed. I found several bundles of little trees being held for want of freight or express charges being guaranteed. My first official work, therefore, was in the line of clearing up matters of this sort—seeing that people got the trees that had been assigned to them, and issuing a small surplus to parties calling at the station and asking for them.

My next attention was given to getting a crop of seeds planted. This in a great measure should have been done earlier, but for reasons that have never been made plain to me, this part of the work was held back at Station No. 1, while at Station No. 2, the foreman, under a grant from the Commissioner to do as he pleased, had pushed this work of seed-planting in such a manner as to make a very material difference in the showing of little trees at that Station, up to a hail-storm in June that destroyed probably 50 per cent. of the crop there.

Our September estimate was that we had at Station No. 1, where the planting had been delayed too late, 1,382,100 little trees grown that season, and at Station No. 2, 911,800, where they had to such an extent been destroyed by hail. These estimates were deemed conservative, and below the actual number, by the foremen at the respective places; but according to the final distribution which is to be given in detail hereafter, these estimates were very close, but rather above than below the final finding in the matter.

Another very awkward feature that has been a continual source of worry and vexation to us, every since it fully developed itself, is that my predecessor during the first nine months of the fiscal year when his term closed, had spent \$4,622.33 of the working fund and only leaving for the remaining three months of the year \$377.67, and the work much of it that ought to

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have been done, left undone. In other words, he had expended in that nine months \$622.33 more than he recommended in his report to be appropriated for the whole of next year or the year following it. By the most rigid economy I have been unable to overcome this combination of circumstances without decreasing the working force, so essential to all things.

At Station No. 1 we have established and planted what we call our *trial* grounds, covering about four acres, and made up of separate blocks of the following sorts of trees, to wit: Black Locust, Black Walnut, Ash, Kentucky Coffee-tree, Box-Elder, Honey Locust, Cottonwood, Elm, Black Wild Cherry, Osage Orange, Russian Mulberry, Ailantus, Hackberry, and Catalpa. These fourteen sorts, while they may not be the very best selection that could be made, were intended to be pretty near it, taking into account their availability. They are intended for an object-lesson, when visitors and persons intending to plant in the future may at a single glance get some idea of the comparative merits of each of these sorts.

At Station No. 2 the trial grounds are not so well arranged, on account of a slight misconception of the foreman there, but the trees are there, and are mostly growing.

My predecessor had made a nice plan for a park, or rather two parks, one east and the other west of the main entrance to the buildings at Station No. 1, in which he had planted the sorts of trees noted in his first annual report. Many of them have done well, while other sorts have faded away. I think he did not furnish duplicates of them to the other station—at least I have not found them there.

Soon after assuming the duties of my office I furnished some eight or nine sorts of trees from my own grounds, not then to be found at these stations. I also procured a donation of nine sorts of Poplars and Willows from Prof. J. L. Budd, of the Iowa Agricultural College; these had been introduced by him from the dry inland regions of Russia. I bought a few sorts of J. J. Jenkins, in eastern Ohio, and about fifty sorts of small seedling trees from that veteran tree-grower, Thomas Meehan, of Germantown, Philadelphia, Pa. All these purchases and donations were divided equally between the two stations; so have also all purchases of seeds.

From the plantings of myself and predecessor, it is safe to say that not much short of one hundred sorts of trees have already been put on trial at these stations, some of which are already gone, others are going, and still others will fade away in the future—some near and others more remotely.

In the trial with so large a number of sorts of trees, we hope there may be found some of the elements of the two-edged sword—cutting both ways—not only pointing out what may be safely and profitably planted and grown in certain localities and under certain circumstances, but determining as well what is not suitable to plant for profit or usefulness. The one lesson may be quite as valuable as the other.

Although we have already passed through trying and test conditions, I feel

it better to withhold specific suggestions until another year, when the outlines to these lessons will be clearer and more sharply defined.

During the summer and early fall of 1889, I sent out to numerous inquirers from nearly all parts of the State, a postal card, of which the following is a copy—except only that they were dated when sent:

FORESTRY STATION No. 1, }
TREGO COUNTY, OGALLAH, KAS., —, 1889. }

Your communication has been received, and your application for trees noted. As soon as the crop of seedlings is fully assured, and the mode of distribution determined upon, you will be further advised of what to do.

Respectfully yours,

MARTIN ALLEN, *Commissioner of Forestry.*

A little later I began sending out a combined circular and blank application, and continued to send them out to all applicants up to the 1st day of March, 1890. I prided myself upon having made this blank so plain, that no one could be mistaken in it, or misconstrue it. You can scarcely imagine how my pride took a tumble when a gentleman with the prefix of Rev. to his name, complained that I had not sent him a blank application, but only a *circular*. The following is a true copy of said document:

CIRCULAR.

Residents of the State of Kansas wishing to secure a share of the seedling trees for free distribution at the Kansas State Forestry Stations, at Ogallah, Trego county, and Dodge City, Ford county, should carefully fill out the following blank application, and return the same to me at either of the *above-named places*, or to *Hays City, Kansas*, (for fall delivery, not later than November 1, 1889, or for spring delivery, not later than March 1, 1890.)

MARTIN ALLEN, *Commissioner of Forestry.*

"I, ———, hereby apply to the Commissioner of Forestry for — seedling trees, which I expect to plant and carefully cultivate and care for upon my homestead—timber claim—deeded land—town lot—on Sec. —, Township —, Range —, in — county, in the State of Kansas, which was first broken in 18—, and has been plowed — times since, and is now in good order and suitable condition for growing trees or other crops. Said location is low—medium—high—level—broken—rough."
(Strike out so as to agree with the facts.)

The following is a list of the trees we now have to send out, given in the order of their number:

<i>Mark Preferences in this Column.)</i>	<i>(Leave this Column Blank.)</i>	<i>(Mark Preferences in this Column.)</i>	<i>(Leave this Column Blank.)</i>
Black Locust....		Cottonwood.....	
Osage Orange...		Gum Ash.....	
Box Elder.....		Hickory.....	
Ailantus.....		Silver-Lf Maple.	
Catalpa.....		Oak.....	
Black Walnut....		Pecan.....	
Honey Locust...			

Write Plainly:

Name, —; post office, —; county, —; railroad station, —; freight, —; express —.

The trees are wanted: Fall of 1889—Spring of 1890.

(Strike out one of the above dates.)

As these came back to me filled out according to the fancy of the various applicants, many of them were real curiosities—some without any name of applicant, some without any description of land, and others defective in divers other ways; so that I was, in many cases, sorely puzzled to know the intentions of the writer. Some were very modest, and only asked for a fair share; others for one or two hundred and up, five to ten thousand being a quite frequent request; others insisted upon from twenty to thirty thousand, and so on up; forty thousand, I think, was the most that anyone wanted to plant.

About two hundred of these applications were returned, requesting their share in the fall of 1889. Although I had advertised fairly, this stock for free distribution, in the *Topeka Daily Capital* and *Kansas Farmer*, I think in the month of September, I did not in November expect to exceed twenty-five hundred applicants; therefore we furnished to each of these two hundred nine hundred trees. Previous to forwarding them, a postal card, of which the following is a true copy, was sent to each party:

HAYS CITY, KANSAS, November 14, 1889.

MR. —: The little trees you are entitled to from the State will be sent out as you have directed about the 20th inst., (unless unfavorable weather intervenes.) Please be good enough to look after them promptly, and relieve me of all trouble about transportation, which I will have to guarantee, and further anxiety for their safety, and oblige.

MARTIN ALLEN, *Commissioner of Forestry*.

This fall delivery was a mistake which I very much regret. I had no other intention, however, than to serve the best interests of the people, nor do I think it was the intention of anyone to profit by it. The little free advertisement which follows, (and for which I can only feel to thank the respective papers before mentioned,) was what seemed to play the mischief with all previous calculations, and to send the people after these little trees:

The residents of the State of Kansas now have nearly two and one-half million of seedling forest trees at their stations at Ogallah, Trego county, and at Dodge City, Ford county. Applications for or inquiries about these little trees, if addressed to either of the above-named places, or to Hays City, Kas., will reach me promptly.

MARTIN ALLEN, *Commissioner of Forestry*.

FREE TREES AT FORESTRY STATION.

EDITOR KANSAS FARMER: Please be good enough to allow space in your paper for me to say to the people of the State that applications for free trees from the State should be made at once, as the blanks should be filled up and returned to me by March 1st, otherwise they cannot be considered. If the applications do not exceed 2,500, we can give each about 900 little trees, or proportionally more or less as varied by the number of persons asking for them.

MARTIN ALLEN, *Commissioner of Forestry*.

Soon after the appearance of these notices in the *Capital* and *Kansas Farmer*, very extravagant stories about it appeared in many papers of the State. The most unreasonable one coming to my notice, I replied to as follows, to wit:

NOT SO MANY TREES.

HAYS CITY, KAS., Jan. 2, 1890.

Editor Meade Republican—SIR: A clipping from your paper over the signature of John Werth, Secretary Meade County Farmers' Alliance, has just reached me. It contains the extravagant statement that I am furnishing twenty-five thousand (25,000) trees to each applicant for the same. Please be good enough to say to your people, in your next issue, not to be deceived by such stories. The Forestry Stations of the State are new, and yet on trial. My predecessor prided himself last year on having one-half million little trees to send out to the residents of the State. We this year have about two and a quarter millions. Now, if twenty-five hundred apply, there would be nine hundred little trees each for them, and this would be on the basis of about one in one hundred of the land-owners of the State applying. And suppose this number applies, and we undertook to supply each with twenty-five thousand, as contemplated in the notice in your paper, it would take the enormous number of sixty-two and a half millions trees to supply them—a number that would probably aggregate the work of all the nurseries on this continent.

MARTIN ALLEN, *Commissioner of Forestry.*

In this fall delivery one party at Wichita claimed to have not got his trees until sometime in January, when they were useless. Another, in the southwest part of the State, finally found his trees in another depot and not the one they had been sent to and where he expected them. His too were worthless. Both of these parties importuned me for more trees, as their shipments were lost to them; but I held in both cases, and in similar ones that have since come up, that my responsibility and the good faith of the State had been properly met when the little trees were shipped in good order; that after this transaction of shipment the whole matter then rested between the carrier and consignee. To this rule there has been one exceptional case, where the depot at West Plains burned, including a bundle of trees that had been sent there. Upon the certificate of the freight agent that the depot had burned and the bundle of trees in question with it, I sent to the same address five hundred trees the next spring.

To parties who signified their intention to get their trees at the stations, I sent out postal cards as follows, to wit:

OGALLA, TREGO Co., KAS., March 16, 1890.

We have over 4,000 applications for little trees! The share to each will be 500. The person this is addressed to will be entitled to that number by surrendering this card as a receipt to the foreman of the station at Ogallah.

MARTIN ALLEN, *Commissioner of Forestry.*

(If you send by some one for them, sign the order below):

"Please let _____ have the trees, and oblige. _____."

Only changing the heading to "Dodge City, Ford Co.," and the ending to "the station at Dodge City," for parties who expected to get their trees there. Strange as it may seem, a party brought in two of these cards, claiming trees on them, well toward the last of the first week in May, and was quite indignant at our not then having the trees for him, we having closed up the business on the first day of that month, and given the surplus trees to other parties.

About the 15th of March we began sending out cards, of which the following is a sample:

OGALLAH, TREGO Co., KAS., April 5, 1890.

We have over 4,000 applications for little trees! Your share (500) will be sent out from the Forestry Station about April 8th to 10th. Please be good enough to receive them promptly, and relieve me of any further responsibility concerning them, and oblige.

MARTIN ALLEN, *Commissioner of Forestry.*

These were continued—changing the date from time to time as the shipments progressed—until the last was sent out on the 10th of April, and the shipments were finished on the 12th. Our first shipments were sent to the east and southeast part of the State, and the last to the northwest.

Notwithstanding that each of the paid advertisements and each circular contained the admonition to have all applications in by the first day of March, they continued to come all through the months of March and April, but with less frequency toward the last. These, of course, could not be considered; in fact, none should have been considered later than the 15th or 20th of February, so that the shipments might have begun a little earlier, and not continued so late.

The September estimate of these little trees was 2,293,900, which we distributed to 200 applicants in the fall, 900 to each or 180,000, but we found upon actual count when we took up the little trees and buried them, that we had over-estimated them, and that we then only had left 1,960,200. These were distributed in the spring, on the basis of 500 to each applicant; but as some only asked for 50 to 100 and others from 200 to 300, it enabled us to serve fifty or sixty more persons, so that in all about 4,175 persons were accommodated with little trees from these stations, as the visible work of my first official year.

These little trees were eagerly sought for, and went into all parts of the State except a few of the eastern and southeastern counties.

This stock ran from 700,000 Black Locust, down in the order mentioned as follows: Box Elder, Ash, Osage Orange, Ailantus, Black Walnut, Catalpa, Honey Locust, Cottonwood, Hickory, Lombardy Poplar, Soft Maple, Oak, Pecan, Russian Mulberry, Elm, Chestnut, Oregon Maple, and 1,000 Kentucky Coffee-trees. At these stations, and throughout the greater part of the State, the soil and atmosphere are too dry and the sunshine too bright for the successful growing of seedlings of the Elm and Soft Maple; these seeds have to be planted as soon as ripe in May, and unless they can have the help of a few cloudy and rainy days just when they are coming out of the ground, they are sure to fail in a great measure. The Oak, Hickory, Pecan, Chestnut, and Oregon Maple seedlings can be grown, but they, being so slow and uncertain in their results, are deemed unworthy of further effort at this time, and until some favorable results are obtained from what have already been sent out from these stations.

The Lombardy Poplar and Cottonwood are so easily grown from cuttings, under favorable circumstances, that people who want these sorts ought to

grow them for themselves, rather than impose such a trust upon the State. In fact, the former is too short lived in any locality to be of much permanent use, and the latter is so unsuited to ordinary upland culture that it only ought to be planted on deep, rich, moist places. In such situations it will grow into saw-logs faster than anything else that I know of.

While the strict text of the law provides only for the distribution of these little trees "to any resident of the State," I have given this clause a liberal construction, and let actual residents of other States have them, where the intention was shown to plant them in Kansas, and that they had the land here to plant them on; but to such a party, whose land was in the western part of the State, and who requested me to send his trees to Denver, I absolutely refused, and declined in all cases to send them out of the State.

Some parties who got trees in the fall wanted another share in the spring, just as though they could be manufactured to order during the winter like boots and shoes, or tinware; others thought we should supply them with a share from each station.

The appropriation of eight hundred dollars by the last Legislature for the building of a house at Forestry Station No. 2, in Ford county, has been well expended through the aid of my foreman at that station, Mr. G. V. Bartlett, Hon. M. W. Sutton, of Dodge City, who secured the appropriation and drew the contract for the building, etc., and Mr. Foley, who did the work. I have to congratulate the State, and thank these three persons for their aid in securing a better building for the money than could ordinarily have been done through private enterprise.

In shipping trees, my predecessor insisted upon persons having their freights guaranteed before they were sent. Some sent money, and did not send enough; others sent too much. Sending back the surplus entailed both work and expense, besides a great deal of friction in small accounts, lest wrong might be done to some one. All this having been so forcibly placed before me in closing up the shipments in the spring of 1889, and it seeming to be so unsatisfactory, that for 1890 I became so heroic as to guarantee all myself and take the chances—with this proviso, however, that where any deliveries could not be made in a reasonable time, the trees should be sold for the charges; and when this could not be done I was to be notified at once, so that I might further direct in the matter. Some complaints have been made of selling the trees too soon to suit the consignees; in other places the trees could not be sold for the freight, and I had it to pay; and notwithstanding the foregoing proviso, these claims continued to be presented to me as late as August, for freight incurred in March and April.

Some parties ordered their trees shipped to stations where there was no agent; therefore our shipments were refused. This was the case with Weskan, Wallace county; Nekoma, Osborne county; Halcyon, Wichita county; Tascos, Sheridan county; and several others.

One of the professors of Midland College, at Atchison, asked for trees to

plant on their college grounds. Upon receiving notice of their shipment, he vainly looked for them at depots of the U. P. and A. T. & S. F. railroads, and finally found them at the office of the Missouri Pacific road, where our agent had sent them in the absence of any instructions as to what road to send them over.

The following letter will no doubt sufficiently explain itself, so as to require no remarks from me; only to say that the trees were shipped, five hundred to each of these parties, on April 9th, and this letter was answered on the 20th of the same month, 1890; and as I considered it a matter between them and the carriers, I did not interfere in any way, not even to send them more trees:

SCOTT CITY, KAS., —, 1890.

Hon. Martin Allen, Hays City, Kansas—DEAR SIR: The freight records show that you sent a bundle of trees to Carl Strickert and J. C. Starr, but we find only two little trees with card attached to Carl Strickert, and a card and a small fraction of bundle of trees to J. C. Starr. They were no doubt lost while transported. We both want trees, and send us each our share to one address to save freight cost. Try and send us trees with more life in them than some had that were received here.

Yours truly,

J. C. STARR.

CARL STRICKERT.

P. S.—Of course we paid no freight charges, as we received no trees. S.

The appropriation for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1889, of \$5,000 for labor, help, hire, postage, printing, etc., was all expended; and it did not prove to be enough for these purposes including freights, repairs, and other incidental expenses. Some bills for expenditures in March, before my administration began, were not audited until July, August and September following.

Of the \$1,100 appropriated for the purchase of trees, seeds, and cuttings, and for traveling expenses of the Commissioner, \$253.48 was covered back into the treasury.

The appropriation for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1890, of \$4,000 for labor, help, hire, postage, printing, etc., was all expended, and it did not prove to be enough to cover all the necessities in this line; but of the \$200 appropriated for traveling expenses of the Commissioner, and \$800 for the purchase of trees, seeds, and cuttings, \$280.24 was left unexpended, and covered back into the treasury.

The appropriation of \$4,000 for labor, help, hire and running expenses for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1891, will not prove adequate to run these stations in the best interests of the people of the State; but the \$800 appropriated for the purchase of trees, seeds and cuttings, is more than will be necessary; and the appropriation of \$300 for traveling expenses of the Commissioner will prove quite sufficient for that purpose, unless his duties in that line should be largely augmented.

Therefore, for the proper carrying on the work at these stations I most respectfully recommend the following appropriations:

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1892.

For salary of Commissioner	\$1,200 00
For purchase of trees, seeds, and cuttings	500 00
(Or so much thereof as may be necessary.)	

For labor, help, hire, postage, printing, and other incidental expenses	\$6,000 00
(Or so much thereof as may be necessary.)	
For traveling expenses of Commissioner.....	300 00
(Or so much thereof as may be necessary.)	

FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1893.

For Commissioner's salary	\$1,200 00
For purchase of trees, seeds, and cuttings.....	500 00
(Or so much thereof as may be necessary.)	
For labor, help, hire, postage, printing, and other incidental expenses	5,000 00
(Or so much thereof as may be necessary.)	
For traveling expenses of Commissioner.....	300 00
(Or so much thereof as may be necessary.)	

I also recommend that the responsibility of common carriers of perishable articles be increased, and that they be required to exercise more care in handling such goods and more diligence in their delivery.

I further most respectfully recommend that sec. 1 of an "act to encourage the planting and growing of timber," page 386, Session Laws 1889, be so amended that it can be better understood. Correspondents to whom I have quoted the entire section, have usually written back asking what it means.

I have been officially invited to go to Dickinson, Douglas, Reno, Ness, Rush, Grant, Wichita, Stevens, and Logan counties, and responded to these calls as far as practicable, and have given to the people such information upon tree-growing as I was in possession of, and answered to the best of my ability such questions as have been propounded to me; besides attending to much correspondence upon this subject, not only with people in Kansas, but more or less, through the Western and Middle States.

The necessity of planting forest trees in the prairie and some other States, seems to be apparent to nearly all; but there seems to be a growing demand for knowledge of what, when, where and how to plant, cultivate, prune, train, etc., and the work in these lines promises to soon become the most valuable element in this office.

The States of New York and Ohio both support forestry commissioners, the former at an annual expense of \$15,000, mainly to preserve their forests, as these are both timber States; then what becomes our duty as the central prairie State of the Union, and probably the most nude of trees of all of them?

The financial statement in this report is made to cover the first fifteen months of my administration, so as to close up at the end of a fiscal year, also to cover the shipping and closing-out season of 1890.

Sorts of trees, modes of culture, successes and failures, as well as other kindred topics, are purposely omitted from this report, with the hope of being better able to treat of them at the expiration of my present term of office.

All of which is most respectfully submitted.

MARTIN ALLEN, *Commissioner*.

OGALLAH, KAS., September 15, 1890.

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